UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

OCT 0 1 2008

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

In accordance with the environmental review guidelines of the Council on Environmental Quality found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500 and with the use as guidance of the implementing environmental review procedures of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled "Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act", the EPA has performed an environmental assessment of the following proposed action.

Proposed Action: Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs Joint Use Board Wastewater Treatment Facility Located in Ruidoso Downs, Lincoln County, NM

Applicant: Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs Joint Use Board

EPA Project Numbers: XP-97630701-4, XP-96631701-0, XP-9665710-1
Total Estimated Project Cost: $34,000,000

Estimated Total EPA Funding:	$2,321,000
Estimated Local Share:	$31,679,000

Project Description: The Fiscal Year Appropriations Act for the EPA, FY 2002, FY 2003 and FY 2005 included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater construction projects. The funding recipient was selected to receive funding through these special appropriations for construction of a wastewater treatment facility to meet the NPDES permit requirements for discharge flow to 0.1 mg/L total phosphorus (TP) and 1.0 mg/L total nitrogen (TN).

The current effluent flow from the existing wastewater treatment facility at Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs, NM exceeds that required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. As part of the preliminary design process, the project engineers for the Joint Use Board (JUB) determined that the total maximum daily limit of 1.0 mg/L for TN, as required in the May 26, 2006 draft of the NPDES permit for the wastewater treatment plant, would be nearly impossible to achieve with the contemplated technology. The JUB subsequently appealed the state certification of the draft NPDES permit to the New Mexico Water Quality Commission. In May 2007, a Settlement Agreement was reached between the JUB and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) allowing effluent from the wastewater treatment plant to the environmentally sensitive Rio Ruidoso to have a TN limit of less than 9.0 mg/L daily maximum if influent temperature is less than 13°C, and less than 6.0 mg/L if influent temperature is 13°C or greater. The Settlement Agreement allowed these limits to be in force for an interim period from

permit. After that period, the effluent must achieve a final effluent limit of 1.0 mg/L TN on a 30-day average, and a daily maximum TN of 1.5 mg/L.

The Settlement Agreement affords the JUB the opportunity to use the first 54 months of the five-year NPDES permit to investigate and report on treatment technologies that would further reduce the total nitrogen in the effluent. It is also possible that the effluent from the new treatment facility will improve the river's health to a point that the 1.0 mg/L TN limit will no longer be required. In such case, the JUB may petition for relief from compliance to the 1.0 mg/L TN limit as provided by the Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Agreement did not call for a new preliminary engineering report, but did stipulate that the final design must incorporate a best-available-technology biological nutrient removal process. The process would be required to reduce TN and TP to the lowest possible concentrations. Construction of a new wastewater treatment plant to achieve compliance with the NPDES permit must be completed within 39 months of the date of issuance, which would make the current commissioning deadline October 2010. However, based on discussions with EPA and NMED, the JUB anticipates the actual commissioning deadline to be December 2010.

Findings: On the basis of the Environmental Assessment (EA), the Environmental Information Documents prepared by Taschek Environmental Consulting for the Village of Ruidoso and City of Ruidoso Downs Joint Use Board, and other available information, the EPA has made a preliminary determination that the project is not a major Federal action and that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted. The project individually, cumulatively, or in conjunction with any other action will not have a significant adverse effect on the quality of the environment. The JUB is the Designated Management Agency for the proposed project service area.

Comments regarding this preliminary decision not to prepare an EIS and issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) may be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Planning and Coordination (6EN-XP), 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733. All comments will be taken into consideration. This preliminary decision and the FNSI will become final after the 30-day comment period expires if no new information is provided to alter this finding. No administrative action will be taken on this decision during the 30-day comment period. Copies of the EA and requests for review of the Administrative Record containing the information supporting this decision may be requested in writing at the above address, or by telephone at (214) 665-8150.

Responsible Official,

John Blevins
Director
Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

Enclosure

cc: Mayor L. Ray Nunley, Chair, Joint Use Board
Ron Curry, Secretary, NMED

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Construction of Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades and Modifications for the Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs Joint Use Board located in Lincoln County, New Mexico

EPA PROJECT NUMBER: XP-97630701-4, XP-96631701-0, and XP-9665710-1

BACKGROUND

The proposed project is located on the existing site of the current wastewater treatment facility in Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico. The area is shown on the map enclosed as Figure 1. The Fiscal Year 2002, 2003 and 2005 Appropriations Act for the EPA included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater treatment construction projects. The funding recipient was selected to receive funding through these special appropriations to construct wastewater treatment facility upgrades and modifications for Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs, NM to meet the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements for discharge flow to 0.1 mg/L total phosphorus (TP) and 1.0 mg/L total nitrogen (TN).

The current effluent flow from the existing wastewater treatment facility at Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs, NM, exceeds that required by the NPDES permit. As part of the preliminary design process, the project engineers for the Joint Use Board (JUB) determined that the total maximum daily limit of 1.0 mg/L for TN, as required in the May 26, 2006, draft NPDES permit for the wastewater treatment plant, would be nearly impossible to achieve with the contemplated technology. The JUB subsequently appealed the state certification of the draft NPDES permit to the New Mexico Water Quality Commission. In May 2007, a Settlement Agreement was reached between the JUB and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) allowing effluent from the wastewater treatment plant to the environmentally sensitive Rio Ruidoso to have a TN limit of less than 9.0 mg/L daily maximum, if influent temperature is less than 13°C, and less than 6.0 mg/L, if influent temperature is 13°C or greater. The Settlement Agreement allowed these limits to be in force for an interim period from completion of construction of the new plant until the last day of the five-year NPDES permit. After that period, the effluent must achieve a final effluent limit of 1.0 mg/L TN on a 30-day average, and a daily maximum TN of 1.5 mg/L.

The Settlement Agreement affords the JUB the opportunity to use the first 54 months of the five-year NPDES permit to investigate and report on treatment technologies that would further reduce the total nitrogen in the effluent. It is also possible that the effluent from the new treatment facility will improve the river's health to a point that the 1.0 mg/L TN limit will no longer be required. In such case, the JUB may petition for relief from compliance to the 1.0 mg/L TN limit as provided by the Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Agreement did not call for a new preliminary engineering report (PER), but did stipulate that the final design must incorporate a best-available-technology biological nutrient removal (BNR) process. The process would be required to reduce TN and TP to the lowest possible concentrations. Construction of a

new wastewater treatment plant to achieve compliance with the NPDES permit must be completed within 39 months of the date of issuance, which would make the current commissioning deadline October 2010. However, based on discussions with USEPA and NMED, the JUB anticipates the actual commissioning deadline to be December 2010.

The proposed project is considered to be a Federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In accordance with the environmental review requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500 and with the use as guidance of EPA's implementing regulations found at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled "Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act", as guidance the EPA is preparing this Environmental Assessment (EA) to assist in determining the environmental impacts of the proposed action, and in evaluating whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be prepared for the proposed project.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Rio Ruidoso is classified as a coldwater fishery that provides wildlife habitat; however, the river has been listed by the State of New Mexico as an impaired waterway due to stream bottom sediments and plant nutrients. Therefore, the EPA, NMED, and the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) have recently instituted and applied very stringent water quality standards to the river. As such, the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) does not meet the current EPA requirements of a year-round phosphorous discharge limitation of 0.10 mg/L and the WQCC-approved Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for phosphorus and nitrogen of 2.72 lbs/day and 27.2 lbs/day, respectively. Further, the required Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) tests currently are not being conducted on the WWTP's effluent. Moreover, the WWTP is overloaded and must be expanded to meet current and future needs. Based on population projections, the plant will need to support flows of 3.8 mgd, where current capacity is 0.77 mgd. Finally, the plant also experiences problems handling the volume of sludge and biosolids disposal with its current system of sludge digestion. The issues facing the JUB and driving the need for the proposed project expansion and upgrade are discussed in detail in the following subsections.

The WWTP was built in 1978 to treat a flow capacity of 0.77 mgd, but a 1993 facilities plan rated the plant capacity at 1.9 mgd. Both estimated flow capacities are based only on the removal of suspended solids, organic carbon, and fecal coliform. The plant was never designed or rated for BNR. The original plant consisted of a flow equalization basin, two surface aerated oxidation ditches, two secondary clarifiers, a chlorination facility, a gravity thickener, an aerobic digester, and sludge drying beds. Influent flow was handled using two open channel screw pump stations.

A plant assessment was conducted as part of the PER to determine the condition of the existing treatment units and components and recommends improvements or repairs. The lower influent lift station and building, the influent and return activated sludge lift station and building, the aeration basins, the aeration basin brush rotor aerators, the secondary clarifiers, the sludge thickener, and the chlorine contact basins were assessed to be in poor condition. The rest of the units and components were deemed in good condition, with the exception of the operation and maintenance building, which was rated in fair condition.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Ruidoso / Ruidoso Downs JUB decided that Phase 1 construction will be broken into two sub-phases as described in the Supplemental Study of Advanced Treatment Options. Phase 1A work will consist of designing, bidding and constructing the following elements prior to the remainder of the project:

- Construct new ultraviolet disinfection facilities.
- Construct new sludge processing building and install the new gravity belt thickener and belt filter press that the JUB has pre-purchased.
- Construct new aerobic digester.
- Construct sludge processing building appurtenant facilities including filtrate treatment unit, filtrate drain lift station, temporary wash water system, and temporary waste activated sludge piping.

Phase 1B will consist of designing, bidding and constructing the following elements:

- New Influent Lift station and headworks including bar screens and grit removal and inlet flow measurement
- Modify and reuse the existing Equalization Basins
- New fine screens prior to the new membrane bioreactors (MBR) secondary treatment facility to include blowers, waste activated sludge pump and permeate pump facility and administration building with laboratory
- Effluent flow measurement

Implementing Phase 1A work first before Phase 1B has the following advantages:

- It allows the plant to maintain treatment throughout construction.
- It allows the JUB to use their pre-purchased sludge processing equipment up to two years sooner than if Phase 1 were implemented without segments.
- It allows fast-tracking of design and construction to insure the project can be completed on time.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The funding recipient evaluated and considered a range of various alternatives to address the infrastructure needs of the area. Important factors influencing the evaluation of the processes and their recommended solutions included environmental acceptability, overall costs, availability

of land for the intended uses, maximum reuse of existing facilities when applicable, operation and maintenance costs, system reliability, accommodation of future expansion needs, and public acceptance. Adherence to local, state and Federal regulations is of prime importance and concern to the funding recipient. The following is a discussion of the alternatives considered or evaluated during the development of the project.

A. **No Action**

The NEPA environmental review process requires consideration of the "no action" alternative. This alternative will allow the current public health concerns and environmental contamination to continue. The environmental consequences of taking "no action", which would allow continued deterioration of the area, were compared with the benefits to be gained from the construction of the proposed project. Since taking "no action" is unresponsive to the current and future infrastructure needs of the funding recipient, and does not protect public health and environmental standards in the area, this alternative was **rejected** from further consideration in favor of implementing the proposed project.

B. **Alternative 1 – Conventional Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR)**

This alternative proposes a conventional BNR process with a pre-anoxic denitrification. The BNR system would remove nitrogen and phosphorus with an anaerobic selector following the headworks, and would recycle return activated sludge. The system would direct waste stream flows to a pre-anoxic zone, which is mixed but not aerated, causing the biomass to use nitrate instead of oxygen for metabolism of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD). The flows would continue to an aerobic zone, where BOD metabolism, ammonification, and nitrification would take place. Mixed liquor from the aerobic zone would be recycled to the anoxic zone. Clarifiers would follow the aerobic zone. This alternative was **rejected** from further consideration because the anticipated effluent quality would not meet the stringent requirements of the NPDES permit.

C. **Alternative 2 – Simultaneous Nitrification and Denitrification (SNdN)**

This alternative would use a SNdN process in which BOD metabolism, ammonification, nitrification, and denitrification occur in the same basin. The use of protein monitoring probes and variable-speed blowers would control concentrations of oxygen, making it possible for these processes to occur simultaneously. This process continues through a post-aeration zone on to the clarifiers. This alternative was **rejected** from further consideration because it would require significant additional equipment to obtain the stringent requirements of the NPDES permit.

D. **Alternative 3 – Bardenpho Process with Membrane Bioreactors**

This alternative would use a conventional BNR process supplemented with MBRs. After passing through anaerobic, anoxic, and aerobic zones, the waste stream would continue into compartments containing MBRs, where pumps would draw permeate through the membranes. Recycle products would be taken from the compartments. The membrane filtration eliminates the need for clarifiers.

Due to the cost savings associated with this option, this is the **preferred** alternative chosen by the funding recipient to meet their wastewater collection and treatment needs.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The WWTP is located in Lincoln County, New Mexico, approximately five miles east of the US 70 and NM 37 intersection, 2,000 feet northeast of the City's eastern boundary, northeast of Agua Fria, and north of the Rio Ruidoso (See, Appendix A for project location maps). The six-acre project area, which includes both the current four-acre WWTP location and the proposed two-acre expansion area, is located within the northwest quadrant of Section 14, Township 11 South, Range 14 East, *Ruidoso Downs*, U.S. Geological Survey 7.5' quadrangle (1991). The project area's Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinates are Northing Range: 3691109 to 3691413, and Easting Range: 448383 to 448571.

The Service Area is in central Lincoln County, in southern New Mexico, and encompasses the Village, the City, and several surrounding unincorporated neighborhoods, which are adjacent communities. This area is located in the Sacramento Mountains and is surrounded by the Lincoln National Forest. Elevations range from 7,000 to 10,000 feet. The average maximum and minimum temperatures in Ruidoso are 65.7° F and 31.5° F, respectively. The average total precipitation is 21.5 inches per year, with an average snowfall of 38.8 inches. The area's pristine, forested environment offers numerous outdoor activities such as fishing, hiking, camping, and skiing, and, as a result, the area is a popular tourist destination. The Service Area's tourist economy includes a large number of part-time residents, which increases the population of the area substantially during peak tourist seasons.

City of Ruidoso Downs. The City is home to the Ruidoso Downs Race Track, the Hubbard Museum of the Horse, a super Wal-Mart, and residential housing along US 70. The City was originally settled near Hale Spring in the 1930s as a farming and sawmill community. The post office was established in 1947, and the horseracing track soon followed. The City was originally named Palo Verde, but the name was changed to Ruidoso Downs in 1958 to better associate it with the racetrack. Racing events were initially participated in and attended by locals, but now include nationally known races such as the All American Futurity.

The City of Ruidoso Downs has a population of 1,824 according to the 2000 Census. Of that total, 67.3% is White, 0.83% is African American, 3.6% is American Indian, 0.7% is Asian and 24.5% is classified "Other", assumedly Hispanic.

The Village of Ruidoso. The Ruidoso area was first inhabited by the Mescalero Apaches as they hunted and fished in the Sacramento Mountain area. Mountain men came to trap in the area, eventually followed by traders, merchants, and their families. The current incorporated Village was originally known as Dowlin's Mill after Captain Paul Dowlin who established a grist mill that still stands today. When the post office was established in the community in 1882, it was named Rio Ruidoso (noisy river), for the river running through the center of town. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Village was a small settlement known for its legendary associations with Billy the Kid and other wild and independent individuals of the West. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Village increasingly became known for its fishing, horseback, riding,

and gambling. Shortly after World War II, Ruidoso Downs was constructed, further establishing Ruidoso as a summer resort destination. In 1962, Sierra Blanca Ski area (now Ski Apache) was opened, and the area became a year-round recreational destination with golf courses, a nearby casino, ski resorts, fishing, and other amenities.

The Village of Ruidoso has a population of 7,698 according to the 2000 Census. Of that total 87.5% is White, 0.3% is African American, 2.4% is American Indian, 0.3% is Asian, and 7.4% is "Other" assumedly Hispanic.

IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project was analyzed to identify potential short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts on the environment. Factors that were considered include the probability of impact occurrence, magnitude of any occurrence, if any predicted occurrence is determined to be reversible/irreversible, direct/indirect or one-time/cumulative, the proposed action's conformity to legal mandates, and the social distribution of risks and benefits. The proposed project should not have a substantial negative impact upon current land uses or land values, nor should it have a substantial impact upon the values of surrounding land holdings. The proposed action is expected to have energy requirements typical of other construction projects of similar scope, size and duration, and will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of all local and state regulations.

The majority of the impacts associated with the proposed project will be short-term and temporary due to actual construction activities, and will cease immediately upon completion of construction work in any particular area. There are no significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the proposed action that cannot be reduced to acceptable levels. The only irretrievable resources committed to this project are labor, machinery wear, materials, funds spent, and energy consumed during construction. The potential short and long-term, direct, indirect and cumulative impacts resulting from the proposed action are identified and discussed below.

1. Biological Resources Including Threatened and Endangered Species: The proposed project was coordinated with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish concerning the protection of listed animal and plant species and their designated critical habitat. Since these protected resources are not known to occur in the project area, federally listed species or their habitats will not be adversely impacted by construction of the project.

2. Cultural/Historic Resources: The proposed project was coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) concerning the protection of sensitive resources with archaeological, historical, architectural, or cultural significance. Since these protected resources are not known to occur in the project area, cultural or historic resources will not be adversely impacted by construction of the project. A good faith effort of tribal consultation indicates that no impacts will occur.

However, should materials, artifacts or properties of a potentially historic or archaeological nature be unearthed during construction, work will stop immediately in that general vicinity, and the funding recipient will immediately notify the SHPO of the discovery. Any such resources discovered will be evaluated in accordance with the requirements of 36 CFR Part 800. Appropriate mitigation measures will be developed and implemented, as needed, in consultation with the SHPO before construction is allowed to continue.

3. Floodplain: The proposed project was coordinated with the local Floodplain Administrator and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) concerning the protection of the floodplain, and compliance with local floodplain management regulations. According to the County of Lincoln's floodplain manager, the proposed project boundaries have areas that fall within FEMA Flood Zone A. Siting of the WWTP facility upgrades and modifications will take place in the location of the existing treatment facility and will avoid encroaching on base floodplains within the project area. "Encroachment" means an action within the limits of the base floodplain. However, if it is determined that the preferred project alternative would encroach on or affect base floodplains in the area by changing base flood elevations, floodplain boundaries, or flow velocities, local, state, and federal water resources and floodplain management agencies will be consulted, and a location hydraulic study will be completed as required by federal regulations for encroachments on floodplains (E.O.11988 and 23 CFR 650.11).

4. Wetlands: Consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has been initiated (Action No. 2005 00315; See, Appendix B for agency correspondence). Though a determination of permit requirement(s) will not be made until final design, if modifications to the outfall structure are deemed necessary by the proposed project, work on the existing outfall structure may be authorized by and performed under the conditions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), Nationwide Permits No. 12, *Utility Line Activities* or No. 7, *Outfall Structures and Maintenance*. A final determination will be made by the Joint Use Board in coordination with the USACE. A Section 404 permit application, along with the project environmental document, will be submitted to the USACE to initiate the permit process. The permit process will be completed prior to project construction. Because Section 404 of the CWA applies to this project, a CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification will also be required. This certification is issued by NMED. This certification process will also be completed prior to construction.

5. Surface Water Resources: The proposed project was coordinated with both the National Park Service and the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission concerning the protection of surface water resources. Effluent will not be discharged into waters which have been designated as a wild and scenic river. Since these protected resources are not known to occur in the project area, surface water resources will not be adversely impacted by construction of the project. The proposed WWTP upgrade and expansion will meet all required water quality standards, and, therefore, will have a positive impact on the Rio Ruidoso.

Because construction will disturb more that one acre of land, a Surface Water Pollution Protection Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared to prevent erosion both during and after construction. The SWPPP will ensure that appropriate best management practices are incorporated into the design and construction plan.

6. Ground Water Resources: The proposed project was coordinated with the NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau concerning the protection of ground water resources for compliance with the NMED groundwater discharge and effluent reuse requirements. Since the project is not located over ground water resources that have been designated as a sole source aquifer, ground water resources will not be adversely impacted by construction of the project.

7. Prime and Unique Farmlands: The proposed project was coordinated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service concerning the protection of prime and/or unique farmlands. Since these protected resources are not known to occur in the project area, prime and/or unique farmlands will not be adversely impacted by construction of the project.

8. Air Quality: The project was coordinated with the NMED Air Quality Bureau concerning the protection of air quality. The proposed project is located in an attainment area which is in compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for all criteria air pollutants. All vehicles and equipment used in the construction of this project must comply with the regulations concerning control of air pollution from mobile sources. Since the project will not violate NAAQS, air quality will not be adversely impacted by construction of the project.

9. Environmental Justice: The proposed project was reviewed for compliance with Executive Order 12898 entitled "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice (EJ) in Economically Stressed Populations. Potential environmental impacts to economically stressed communities were evaluated using Geographical Information System maps, census demographic data, and a mathematical formula to rank the project for EJ impacts. The project will serve all populations equally and will be constructed in a manner to ensure that no persons or populations will be discriminated against or denied the benefits of the project. There will be no adverse impacts that are considered disproportionate to any particular population(s). The results of the EJ analysis are shown in the attached EJ Analysis. The analysis results in a ranking scale of one to one hundred that indicates the potential for economically stressed. A ranking below thirteen indicates the low possibility of economically stressed while a ranking above fifty indicates a high probability of economically stressed.

10. Coastal and Barrier Resources: Since the entire state of New Mexico is inland and not adjacent to any coastal location, construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to coastal and barrier recourses.

11. Cumulative Impacts: Potential cumulative impacts would be those impacts to the local environment that would result from the proposed project in combination with other ongoing actions, and those reasonably foreseeable future actions. No other major construction activity is being conducted presently or planned for the immediate future. The proposed project will not individually nor cumulatively over time have a negative impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. To the contrary, improved infrastructure will have a positive environmental effect by enhancing public health and protecting the surface and ground water from continued contamination.

DOCUMENTATION, COORDINATION, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public hearings for the proposed project were held on May 3, 2006 and again on February 27, 2008 at 6:15 PM at the Hubbard Museum of the American West in Ruidoso Downs, NM. The purpose of the meetings was to inform the public of the proposed project, to identify any issues of concern, and to request public participation in the development of the project. The project is supported by the community, no adverse public comments or concerns were received.

During the process of conducting the environmental review and preparing this EA for the project, coordination has been conducted with all required resource protection agencies and offices to solicit and incorporate their initial review and comments, if any. Copies of this EA will be provided to those agencies and offices for their final review and comments, if any. Other interested parties may request a copy of the EA in writing from the EPA, Office of Planning and Coordination (6EN-XP), 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733.

References

1. Environmental Information Document, Taschek, July 2006 and supplemental by Taschek, Jan., 2008
2. Engineering Report, Archuleta, Nov 2005 and Supplemental by Archuleta 10/26/07

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon completion of this Environmental Assessment, and a detailed review of the supporting information contained in the Environmental Information Document, the Public Hearing Responsiveness Summary, Table 1, which were prepared for the project, and other pertinent technical, engineering and administrative documentation, the proposed project is considered to be cost-effective and environmentally sound. Therefore, it is recommended that a Finding of No Significant Impact be issued for this project.